



OUR CONFEDERATE COLUMN

ON SNODGRASS HILL.

HOW VIRGINIANS, KENTUCKIANS, AND CAROLINIANS TOOK IT.

A GRAPHIC STORY OF THE CHARGE.

Colonel J. M. French, of the Sixty-third Virginia Regiment, Describes the Splendid Assault and How the Heights Were Held.

The endorsement by Lee and Pickett camps of Confederate Veterans, of this city, of the plan of Colonel J. M. French, of the Sixty-third Virginia Infantry, to erect suitable monuments upon the Chickamauga battle-field to mark the part the troops from Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky bore in that great battle has raised renewed interest in the subject.

Colonel French says that in his opinion these troops, though history has never made the fact prominent, did a great deal to save the day at Chickamauga, by driving the Federals from Snodgrass Hill, where they were stationed to protect the rear of Rosecrans.

The monuments on the Chickamauga field mark the positions of all the troops except these, and Colonel French says they actually give the Federals the credit of having held Snodgrass Hill when they were driven from it.

COLONEL FRENCH'S STORY.

Following is the graphic story of the part the Virginians, Kentuckians, and Carolinians bore in the battle, as related by Colonel French:

"My regiment, with the Fifth Kentucky and the Fifty-third North Carolina, constituted a brigade, commanded by Colonel Kelly, of Kentucky, General Preston, also of Kentucky, commanding the division to which we were attached. We were stationed on the right end of our line of battle and continued in that position until about half-past 3 o'clock in the afternoon, when the enemy gave way in our front, and we moved by the left flank until in front of Snodgrass Hill, where we were halted. The command to 'Close up' was then given, and when the enemy was close upon us, we were ordered to 'Load and fire.' The first volley was fired, and the enemy was driven back, and we moved forward to the field of battle, as never forgotten by those who received it—'fix bayonets.'

"My regiment occupied the left centre, the Fifth Kentucky on the left, with the Carolina regiments on our right. Colonel Kelly then ordered the first regiment on the right to advance at quick step, and when it had reached a distance of forty paces the next to follow, and so on until the four were in motion towards the fortifications on the hill. The orders were to give the enemy a volley and then to fire, and we did so.

PROUD OF HIS VIRGINIANS.

"You should have seen the Virginians that day. I tell you, my boy, it makes me proud to think how my men lined up under that terrible fire from the Union army, as cool, apparently, as if on parade for the first time. The first volley was fired, and the enemy was driven back, and we moved forward to the field of battle, as never forgotten by those who received it—'fix bayonets.'

"At once changed the front of my three right companies in order to face the enemy, which the Carolinians had failed to drive out on the right, and which were pouring a deadly fire into us. At the same time the enemy did the same thing, and it looked as though I would have to withdraw or lose the three companies.

A HOT TWENTY MINUTES.

"Colonel Kelly galloped up to me, and shouted: 'If you can hold your position twenty minutes I will have you reinforced.' 'We will try,' I replied, and the men went in with the Carolina regiments on the right and when the enemy was close upon us, we were ordered to 'Load and fire.' The first volley was fired, and the enemy was driven back, and we moved forward to the field of battle, as never forgotten by those who received it—'fix bayonets.'

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WOMAN'S FRIEND.

The Great Medicine that Gives Nerve Strength.

Hood's Sarsaparilla Makes the Blood Rich and Pure, Creates an Appetite and Restores Health, Vigor and Vitality.

"I feel that I ought to write a few words in praise of Hood's Sarsaparilla, which has done great things for me. I was in a delicate condition and was sick at my stomach and constipated. I tried remedies highly recommended for female weaknesses, but the medicines brought on other troubles. I was so weak I could not attend to my household duties, and I then determined to try Hood's Sarsaparilla. After I had taken this medicine a short time I began to gain strength. I grew stronger each day until I was able to work all day without any inconvenience. I have taken Hood's Pills for constipation, and I am better today than I have been for five years. Since taking Hood's Sarsaparilla and Hood's Pills I feel rested in the morning. I am less nervous and am sure I have richer and purer blood. I have always been bothered with scrofula, but now I am rid of it. Before my last child was born I took Hood's Sarsaparilla, and my girl baby was fat and strong, while my other child was not well and lived to be only two years old." Mrs. E. F. DEAL, Box 419, Missouri Valley, Iowa.

Hood's Pills are the best in fact the One True Blood Purifier.

Hood's Pills are purely vegetable, carefully prepared, 25 cents.

ROBBERED OF THEIR GLORY.

"It was a glorious day, but now let

me tell you what I saw a short time ago. You know the battle-field has been purchased by the National Government and converted into a park. It is a beautiful place, with monuments scattered all over it, marking the positions at which various commands were stationed, what strongholds they took, their loss, etc. The troops of every State, North and South, are remembered in this way, except the Virginians. Not only have we neglected to raise a stone to perpetuate their valor, but the monuments on Snodgrass Hill actually give the Federals the credit of having held it throughout the engagement, when our brigade had driven them from it, comparatively early in the afternoon, and held it against repeated assaults.

"I mentioned this fact to Colonel Smart, one of the commissioners, and he urged me to endeavor to have the position of the Virginians suitably marked."

REBEL THESPIANS.

Interesting Incidents in Experience of Confederate Prisoners of War.

(Wilmington Messenger.)

There are many incidents of the late civil war coming to the front as the years put us further from the conflict. We have heard how cheerfully and heroically the Confederate soldiers endured the hardships of camp life, and how full of fun and humor they were in the face of all the dangers and privations that beset them every day. Their patriotism and fighting qualities are a matter of history, recorded in the battles that made the great American war the most noted in the annals of the world. How many, however, know the details of the life of the soldiers and the restraints of prison life, that the boys in gray gave some of their time and attention to historical matters, and played their parts upon the stage?

Our esteemed citizen, Captain James I. Metts, Third North Carolina Infantry, was a prisoner of war at Johnson's Island in 1862-64, and he tells us that even in the confinement of prison the boys kept up their spirits, and had frequent theatrical entertainments. As members of these occasions, Captain Metts is the possessor of several bills advertising the plays and giving the casts.

ISLAND MINSTRELS.

One of the bills proclaims the fact that the "Island Minstrels" would on Saturday afternoon, October 10, 1863, give an entertainment. Under the head line of the bill the names of the following management appear:

"Manager and Proprietor, Mr. Charles L. Stout."

"Acting Stage Manager, Mr. E. H. Walter."

"Musical Director, Mr. W. H. Harris."

"Treasurer, Mr. J. C. Ward."

The following unique announcement is made:

"The manager having had forty years' experience in his peculiar line of business, is proud to announce to the friends of the institution and citizens of Johnson's Island, that after unparalleled exertions he has succeeded in procuring the first order of talent from the celebrated Irish comedian, Billy Boyd, and also the following stars: Mr. D. L. Dunham, the imitator of bones; Mr. T. F. Mitchell, the renowned guitarist; Mr. J. C. Ward, the exquisite fiddler; Mr. William Harris, the modern Pantomime; Mr. Ole Bull, the violinist; Mr. Paul Julian, the pianist; Mr. Joe Sweeney Cronin, Mr. Triangular Decker, Mr. Charles L. Stout. Feeling that he would not be able to do justice to his own merits, he respectfully invites the public to come and see what he can do with the tambourine."

Then follows an interesting programme of songs, jig-dancing, and music by the members of the company and the band. As a third part, it is announced that "the astonishing afterpiece entitled 'The Secret of the Hole in the Fence,' would be presented."

REBEL THESPIANS.

Another bill announces that the "Rebel Theatricals" would appear Thursday evening, January 7, 1864, in "an original drama, written expressly for the Theatricals."

The bill says: "The manager feels an honest pride in presenting this performance to his fellow-prisoners, a splendid melodrama, in five acts, by a member of the association. The play reflects much credit on the young author, exhibiting great beauty and perfection in delineation of character. It presents to the soldier many familiar scenes of the 1st, 2d, and 3d of July at Gettysburg, Pa." The performance concluded with the farce "Box and Cox." The orchestra included the talent in the "Island Minstrels," and among the names of the management appears the name of Captain John H. Metts, as promoter, who years after the war became the famous District Attorney of New York. In the farce Captain Metts took the role of "Box." Our townsman, Captain James I. Metts, then Lieutenant, appeared in the drama cast as "Mrs. Louisa White."

THE REBELLIONS.

Another of the bills announces the first appearance of the "Rebellerions," Thursday, April 14, 1864. They gave a minstrel performance, and concluded with "The Intelligent Contraband," an original farce, written for the "Rebellerions." Lieutenant Metts was down in the cast.

The price of admission to these performances was 25 cents, and reserved seats, 50 cents. In one of the bills it is announced "Children and Niggers Half Price."

SEVEN PINES.

Reminiscences of an Old Soldier—Some Incidents of the Battle.

(By Colonel Del Kemper.)

Do you recollect the night before the battle in our camps when lightning, fierce, vivid, almost blinding, followed by thunder crashing and reverberating, ushered in a torrent of rain that if it did not sweep all the tents away it swept under and around them, permeating everything and everything, how in that black darkness the men who waked with a gutted under their feet stood up but to have a smaller current rushing down their vertebrae? It was a wild night and such language, unparliamentary, I am afraid, was used before the dawn was ushered in and the long roll roused our camps, and "fall in men" changed the current of our thoughts.

On the roads over which the troops marched that bright May morning, raindrops sparkled on every leaf. The steady, wild rose, and flowers innumerable exhaled their sweetness on the morning air, and hundreds of old Virginia song-birds united in one glad Te Deum as we passed along between the hedge rows, all unconscious of the day's coming tragedy. After wading swollen streams, plunging through mud and mire, the column struck the Williamsburg road, down which we continued our march—mighty tired, a little soiled, and damp, and fighting mad.

"Why could not this day's work be done in the morning? It would have been a better day," said some, but they were silenced by our regimental strategist, who had received a dispatch by the "grapevine telegraph" that "Little Mac" was crossing the Chickamauga in ferriesboats, and so we wandered and stumbled on.

About this time a handsome, dashing young staff officer, well mounted, rides up to our column, touches his hat, speaks a few words, and the command, "Forward! double quick! march!" rings out. The men swing on the reins, and the young officer—Lawrence Meem—rides on to his death. We follow, and right "into the jaws of death" rushed the six hundred. Every step brings to our view the marks of where the battle opened—dead men, dead horses, and the smoke of battle. Striding the battery, stuck fast in the mud, but whose officers and men were struggling heroically and under heavy fire to bring their guns into action, through streams of wounded men and stragglers falling back, the latter a type of all such with the old story of the commands having been cut to pieces and they only left to tell the harrowing story.

About 1 o'clock the sound of the first guns of the battle was borne to our ears, and our commander, with the right of the road in an open field, stacked arms, opened haversacks, cut our teeth on some hardtack, and listened to the music in our front, which ran the gamut from the dull booming of artillery to the sawing, rattling sound of small arms. This was not calculated to do much for our spirits, but we were comforted by the assurance of our strategist that we were to be held in reserve. This delusion was sharply ended about 4 o'clock by the command, "Fall in men!" again we moved back upon the Williamsburg road, the head of the column turning in the direction of the firing, and we feel our time has come.

Now we strike the hall of shot and shell plunging around. Shell with fuses well cut burst over our column as it rushes on, while gas and smoke fill the air. We are struck down and out; the command, "close up men!" rises out and over the noise of the battle as left in front we go. Wheeling to the right at Casey's camp, or Baker's house, we halt for a moment to close up, and then the enemy, yet unseen, pour in an incessant fire which sweeps the plateau as we emerge from behind a woodpile for the charge.

Now amid the roar and tumult of the battle the shouts of the captains, the dull thud of the bullets, the sharp cries of the wounded, and men fall around as autumn leaves. Down go our colors, only to be snatched from the nerveless hand to be waved aloft, to fall again, till passing through three gallant hands, we fall back by command, and the enemy, who were reverse side of the enemy's works. Here we return their fire as best we may and hold the enemy in check.

New troops are rushed in with the same result, to hold the works carried by our troops.

Early in the day, arrived among them Colonel Moore with his regiment of Alabamians. The writer and several others begged him to dismount and walk under the fire of the enemy, but he refused, and had only gone a few yards when he was knocked from his horse, and we ran to help him. "It's no use, boys; I am gone," he said. "Where are you, your color?" and he replied by putting his hand to his forehead. We took his sword-belt, opened his coat, and found a minie-ball had struck in the centre of his watch and buried itself there, but had not entered his body. We righted him up, bade him goodspeed, and saw him start for his post on the right. He was going far we saw him fall again, with what result we never knew, as our hands were too full in keeping back the enemy in our front. They advanced their charge several times to form a line of color, and when they returned, they fell under our fire and they could not form their line of battle.

General Kemper called for a volunteer to carry an order, and Tom Fitzgibbon, a pride of his, stepped up, touched his cap, and said: "Give me the order, your service." I can see him now as he stood there with his manly form, the laughing blue eyes, the handsome face lit up with the glow of excitement before the end of his bright career. He returned, but with a shattered arm, saying in his cheery way, "Tie it up, Major; I have won my ribbon to-day." Yes, I tied up the arm, but his life ebbed away, and his name and his gallant deeds, like many others, have passed from the memory of men.

An officer reported to General Kemper that a field officer was wanted on our right. All had been killed or wounded, and the men were without officers. There was another call for volunteers for this duty, and the writer offered to go. Straight to the right meant death, as the air was filled with death-dealing missiles, so straight to the rear I ran and was knocked over without being seriously hurt and arrived at the position only in time to see one or two of our brigades strike the enemy's flank and close this bloody day. Hindsight criticism though it be, if we had been put in where these brigades were, it would have ended the fight long before and saved many a brave man's life.

After the battle comes the sad duty of interring the dead; the open trenches with the lines of men in group, who stood together in life but yesterday, now once more together in death. The few words of prayer, and they are left to their last long sleep. Casey's camp was a mine of wealth to the boys. The writer stumbled into his mess-chest, filled his haversack with lemons, anchovy paste, and other delicacies, and a wounded Yankee artillery horse loose, and with the surgeon's permit mounted and started for Richmond. It was now dark, and the wounded horse plunged through the mud like a pilot-boat in a chop sea, and once or twice I thought we had foundered together, but he would come up and we pressed on. An ambulance passed, and he halted. He was asked and asked to get taken in. "Who are you?" and I gave my name. I am answered by that brave old soldier, Colonel James H. Skinner, of the First Virginia. "Why bless me, yes, I know you, get in," which was easier said than done, but with him and Lieutenant-Colonel Langhorne, of the Eleventh Virginia, who was fearfully wounded, we reached Richmond about midnight.

A soldier's life has its humorous side as well as the pathetic, and that I may bring a smile to the old vets who read this, will add this true story: In an out-house near General Casey's headquarters there were several barrels of whiskey, and after the battle you may be sure it was taken in. The hitler dropped some of the men became literally drunk, and were reported dead to the burial party. Before the detail reached the spot all had managed to crawl off but one private and a lieutenant, who still lay there with no apparent pulse and eyes glazed. They were placed on a stretcher and the party started. Whether the motion of the stretcher or the fresh outdoor air brought them to life we cannot tell, but up they rose, casting wild looks around them. The hitler dropped the stretcher, and amid great laughter and much chaffing they realized how near they came being buried alive.

What a contrast with that spring morning thirty-five years ago, when the drums in sonorous throats beat to arms, and the command, "Fall in men," sounded from every camp around our capital city.

Where are the legions that stood that day between you and the foe. A few old gray-haired veterans are all that are left, and in a few days more there will be one to tell his story of that day's battle.

"Over the river, under the shade of the trees," they are still mustering, and soon the refrain, "All present or accounted for," will be borne back to a generation who will be strangers to them and their historic deeds.

Richard Kirkland.

(For the Dispatch.)

There had been an awful battle at the foot of Mary's Hill, and the blood of the slain was still on the ground.

Thirty thousand northern soldiers, eager for the deadly fray, yesterday had charged the trenches where the southern army lay.

Pierce had been the rage of combat, fierce the storm of shot and shell, and the blood of the slain was still on the ground.

Rose the angry "rebel yell," then the northern troops had wavered, "Neath the shower of southern lead, and had left their wounded comrades lying 'mid the mangled dead."

And above them raged the battle, as in agony they lay. A man swung on the reins, and the young officer—Lawrence Meem—rides on to his death. We follow, and right "into the jaws of death" rushed the six hundred. Every step brings to our view the marks of where the battle opened—dead men, dead horses, and the smoke of battle. Striding the battery, stuck fast in the mud, but whose officers and men were struggling heroically and under heavy fire to bring their guns into action, through streams of wounded men and stragglers falling back, the latter a type of all such with the old story of the commands having been cut to pieces and they only left to tell the harrowing story.

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An officer reported to General Kemper that a field officer was wanted on our right. All had been killed or wounded, and the men were without officers. There was another call for volunteers for this duty, and the writer offered to go. Straight to the right meant death, as the air was filled with death-dealing missiles, so straight to the rear I ran and was knocked over without being seriously hurt and arrived at the position only in time to see one or two of our brigades strike the enemy's flank and close this bloody day. Hindsight criticism though it be, if we had been put in where these brigades were, it would have ended the fight long before and saved many a brave man's life.

After the battle comes the sad duty of interring the dead; the open trenches with the lines of men in group, who stood together in life but yesterday, now once more together in death. The few words of prayer, and they are left to their last long sleep. Casey's camp was a mine of wealth to the boys. The writer stumbled into his mess-chest, filled his haversack with lemons, anchovy paste, and other delicacies, and a wounded Yankee artillery horse loose, and with the surgeon's permit mounted and started for Richmond. It was now dark, and the wounded horse plunged through the mud like a pilot-boat in a chop sea, and once or twice I thought we had foundered together, but he would come up and we pressed on. An ambulance passed, and he halted. He was asked and asked to get taken in. "Who are you?" and I gave my name. I am answered by that brave old soldier, Colonel James H. Skinner, of the First Virginia. "Why bless me, yes, I know you, get in," which was easier said than done, but with him and Lieutenant-Colonel Langhorne, of the Eleventh Virginia, who was fearfully wounded, we reached Richmond about midnight.

A soldier's life has its humorous side as well as the pathetic, and that I may bring a smile to the old vets who read this, will add this true story: In an out-house near General Casey's headquarters there were several barrels of whiskey, and after the battle you may be sure it was taken in. The hitler dropped some of the men became literally drunk, and were reported dead to the burial party. Before the detail reached the spot all had managed to crawl off but one private and a lieutenant, who still lay there with no apparent pulse and eyes glazed. They were placed on a stretcher and the party started. Whether the motion of the stretcher or the fresh outdoor air brought them to life we cannot tell, but up they rose, casting wild looks around them. The hitler dropped the stretcher, and amid great laughter and much chaffing they realized how near they came being buried alive.

What a contrast with that spring morning thirty-five years ago, when the drums in sonorous throats beat to arms, and the command, "Fall in men," sounded from every camp around our capital city.

Where are the legions that stood that day between you and the foe. A few old gray-haired veterans are all that are left, and in a few days more there will be one to tell his story of that day's battle.

stured the talent in the "Island Minstrels," and among the names of the management appears the name of Captain John H. Metts, as promoter, who years after the war became the famous District Attorney of New York. In the farce Captain Metts took the role of "Box." Our townsman, Captain James I. Metts, then Lieutenant, appeared in the drama cast as "Mrs. Louisa White."

THE REBELLIONS.

Another of the bills announces the first appearance of the "Rebellerions," Thursday, April 14, 1864. They gave a minstrel performance, and concluded with "The Intelligent Contraband," an original farce, written for the "Rebellerions." Lieutenant Metts was down in the cast.

The price of admission to these performances was 25 cents, and reserved seats, 50 cents. In one of the bills it is announced "Children and Niggers Half Price."

SEVEN PINES.

Reminiscences of an Old Soldier—Some Incidents of the Battle.

(By Colonel Del Kemper.)

Do you recollect the night before the battle in our camps when lightning, fierce, vivid, almost blinding, followed by thunder crashing and reverberating, ushered in a torrent of rain that if it did not sweep all the tents away it swept under and around them, permeating everything and everything, how in that black darkness the men who waked with a gut